

Kalamazoo Public Library
OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PUBLIC MEETING

Date: September 26, 2016

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Location: Washington Square Branch Library, Community Room

TRUSTEE ROLL CALL:

Present: Robert Brown, Bruce Caple, Lisa Godfrey, Kerria Randolph, and James VanderRoest

Absent: Cheryl TenBrink, Valerie Wright

CALL TO ORDER:

President Caple called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

AGENDA APPROVAL:

The agenda was amended to allow for an executive session of the Board of Trustees prior to adjournment.

I. RECOGNITIONS, RESOLUTIONS, COMMUNICATIONS

A. Resolution Honoring the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and its Contribution to Building the Capacity of Public Libraries

Executive Summary: Over the past 20 years, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has invested an estimated \$1 billion in public libraries. The foundation is now ending its work with public libraries and moving on to other priorities. The Urban Library Council, of which we are a member, will present the foundation with the ULC Executive Leadership Award on behalf of all ULC member libraries and is suggesting that each ULC member library ask their governing board to pass a resolution recognizing the foundation's contributions to public libraries. The resolutions will be gathered by ULC and presented to the foundation along with the leadership award.

KPL received more than 50 PCs through the foundation. They were placed in branches, in the Tech Center at Central, and our computer lab, and came loaded with Internet Explorer and MS Office. The foundation guidelines required that the PCs be available for public use at no cost and with no staff intervention needed. They were to provide access to external information, namely the internet, and personal productivity or reference software....word processing, spreadsheets, educational software for example.

Some of the equipment came directly to us, some through the Southwest Michigan Library Cooperative to which the foundation provided grants. For many small libraries, these Gates Computers, as they were called, were the first and for a while, the only PCs they had for the public. For larger libraries like us, it greatly expanded our tech capability long before home PCs were popular.

MOTION: L. GODFREY MOVED AND K. RANDOLPH SUPPORTED THE MOTION TO ADOPT THE RESOLUTION HONORING THE BILL AND MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Discussion: No

Roll Call Vote: L. Godfrey – yes; K. Randolph – yes; R. Brown – yes; B. Caple – yes.

II. PERSONS REQUESTING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

No one addressed the Board.

III. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. *Minutes of the Meeting of August 22, 2016*

B. *Personnel Items*

IV. FINANCIAL REPORTS

A. *Financial Reports for the Month Ending August 31, 2016*

Recommendation: Director Rohrbaugh recommended the board accept the Financial Reports for the month ending August 31, 2016.

Discussion: President Caple stated that if there were any questions regarding the Financial Reports that should be directed to J. VanderRoest, he would be joining the meeting before long.

MOTION: L. GODFREY MOVED AND R. BROWN SUPPORTED THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR THE MONTH ENDING AUGUST 31, 2016.

MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

V. REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

REPORTS:

A. *Orientation for New Employees – Terry New*

Report: Director Rohrbaugh introduced Terry New, Human Resources Manager. She began by passing around the orientation documents which are given to each new employee. She explained the current orientation model draws upon her own experiences as a new KPL employee, stating it took her approximately one year to develop a full understanding of KPL services.

Shortly thereafter she happened to read Dr. Atul Gawande's *The Checklist Manifesto* in which he advocates the use of checklists in the operating room and elsewhere in the business world. She explained the ways in which she has applied a checklist format to the presentation of the orientation process and stated new employees are assigned peer mentors who act as a first connection and periodically render assistance and guidance to the new employee.

On their first day, employees meet with her to complete HR paperwork & benefits, the IT department to create an email account and be introduced to network and computer use protocols, and Susan Lindemann, Head of Facilities Management for safety training. After that, they utilize the orientation checklist to meet with staff from all library departments as their schedule allows.

Disposition: Trustees thanked T. New for her report.

B. 2016 Summer Reading Challenge Wrap-Up

Report: Director Rohrbaugh introduced Michael Cockrell, Head of Adult Services and Andrea Vernola, Lead Teen Librarian.

A. Vernola began the report by explaining that in addition to M. Cockrell and herself, the Summer Reading Team consists of Kala Luzia, Jill Lansky, Kevin King, Farrell Howe, and Nancy Davis-Smith. She then distributed statistics regarding signups and prize collection rates. She stated that 5,912 patrons signed up for the Summer Reading Challenge this year, more than any year on record. She said that large school outreach efforts are to thank for that number.

She continued, stating 2,666 completed 15 days of the challenge, 2,270 completed 30 days, 1,879 completed 45 days, and 1,447 completed 60 days. Approximately 4,800 books were given away to children, tweens, and teens, and more than 6,000 prizes were distributed. She estimates that this resulted in at least 14,000 interactions between patrons and staff.

She reported that for the first time an online tool was used for the Summer Reading Challenge. While this initially constituted a learning curve for patrons, by the end of the program, very few questions regarding its use were being asked. A survey was conducted, and many patrons reported using both the Beanstack online tool and the paper game boards to record their progress. Patrons also reported frustration with the calendar recording tool online, an issue which will be addressed in next year's version of Beanstack, along with an improved age entry function to better track the demographics of users and ensure that proper prizes are awarded.

J. VanderRoest arrived at the meeting.

A. Vernola stated prizes for adults this year consisted of raffle tickets to win gift certificates to the Friends of KPL Bookstore for the 15, 30, and 45 day prizes. The 60 day prize was a colorful ceramic mug. Babies, children, tween, and teens earned books for the 15, 30, and 45 day prizes, and the 60 day prizes were t-shirts for babies and children, and keychain wallets for teens and tweens.

Bonus activity lists were categorized into 'learning tracks' this year. Previously, interest in completing bonus activity lists had been fairly low, with 450 total patrons completing the list in 2015. In 2016, 1,053 learning track lists were completed. M. Cockrell stated he would like to integrate the adult learning tracks directly into the Summer Reading Challenge to provide more of a 'challenging' experience for adult patrons. He also stated that many patrons expressed satisfaction with the books recommendations that were being provided by Beanstack, especially for children.

Discussion: President Caple asked whether there were any adult learning track activities aimed at reading to children. M. Cockrell said there were not, because they wanted to avoid the presumption that all the adults taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge had children in their lives to read to. A. Vernola stated it was certainly something that was considered, and that many of the children's learning tracks had family-oriented objectives.

Director Rohrbaugh expressed her thanks to Janice Snell and the Friends of KPL for funding the majority of the Summer Reading Challenge. She stated she intended to thank the entire Friends Board at the next meeting.

L. Godfrey asked whether the books that were redeemed from the Friends Bookstore using the gift certificates constituted a loss in revenue for the bookstore. Director Rohrbaugh stated the library purchased the gift certificates directly from the Friends, and she presumed many patrons spent more than just the balance of the gift certificate. A. Vernola agreed and said the goal was to drive foot traffic to the bookstore.

L. Godfrey then stated she found the online tool to be cumbersome and felt that many of the adult learning tracks were too focused on usage of social media. M. Cockrell asked if the board had any suggestions for learning track activities. L. Godfrey stated she would have liked to see activities that were more stimulating. J. VanderRoest said he felt many of them were more geared towards young adults. L. Godfrey suggested the posting of book reviews on social media outlets would be more engaging and more aligned with the act of reading in general.

M. Cockrell stated since 'reading' was only one of the tracks, the goal was to create additional bonus activities around themes of 'lead', 'explore', 'move', and 'create'. He said the goal was for patrons to share their creations with the KPL social media accounts in order to raise visibility of the Summer Reading Challenge. Director Rohrbaugh stated another benefit would be to drive traffic to the KPL social media sites. A. Vernola stated she thought it was important to keep in mind that to many people, social media is a very real space. M. Cockrell also explained that one particular activity that generated a lot of responses was the taking of photos of Murals throughout Kalamazoo.

J. VanderRoest summarized his response to the conversation regarding bonus activities by stating that he believes if KPL is going to continue the Summer Reading Challenge, most of the activities should directly involve reading at some point in the process. A. Vernola stated that preliminary research conducted by the Summer Reading Challenge team determined that the sort of activities that were being offered this year are indicative of best & common practices regarding summer reading programs, especially in urban libraries. She said increasingly, such programs are being viewed as summer 'learning' programs, and the responses that KPL staff have received from organizations such as KidNet have been positive. Furthermore, she explained that since all educational facets of science, technology, engineering, reading, art, and math experience 'summer slide' when it comes to school age children, it seems to make sense to adopt a broad approach.

J. VanderRoest said he understood and suggested perhaps the title of the program should be changed to the 'Summer Learning Challenge'. He also stated that while many patrons he spoke to expressed frustration with the online reading log calendar, on the positive side, both he and his wife were very pleased with the quality of the adult 60 day prizes.

Disposition: Trustees thanked A. Vernola and M. Cockrell for their report.

C. Washington Square Update – Steve Siebers

Report: Director Rohrbaugh introduced Steve Siebers, Lead Washington Square Branch

Librarian. S. Siebers began by welcoming the board to the Washington Square Library. He reminded those in attendance that a branch tour would commence following the meeting. He then said, in regards to the board resolution honoring the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, that while he was in library school he was awarded a grant from the foundation which paid for the second year of his classes.

He stated he has served as the manager of the Washington Square location since March of this year, and in addition to making a handful of changes to the collection spaces, which would be pointed out during the tour, he has heavily prioritized outreach to area preschools.

Regarding outreach, he stated that story times had not been held at Washington Square for a while prior to his acceptance of the position, and Kevin King, Head of Branch and IT Services had suggested outreach as a way to reinvigorate connections with area youth. S. Siebers said he agreed and outreach to preschools seemed like a logical way to ensure he was reaching children of a specific age who were residents of the surrounding community.

In addition to the three head start programs that were already being visited, he has added Learning Village, Loy Norrix Preschool, the YMCA, the YWCA, and the Bread and Roses Alternative Daycare to the list. He stated that response, especially from the Bread and Roses kids and staff has been very positive. Additionally, he said he will be starting a new outreach program with the Caring Network tomorrow. Since one of the focuses of the Caring Network is working with teen moms, it seemed like a good fit, and S. Siebers was contacted to provide story time outreach services. He also stated a relationship is in the works with the Hispanic American Council, but it remains unclear at this time whether anything will come of it.

S. Siebers then stated the Boys and Girls Club nearby seems to be engaged in efforts with many of the same goals as KPL, and the services provided by that organization seem popular. As a result, we can assume that there exist demographics being targeted by outreach efforts that are being served, even if it's not by the library. S. Siebers stated he has visited the Director of the Boys and Girls Club to talk about potential partnerships, and will continue to do so. He explained the Boys and Girls Club is currently conducting a summer learning program not unlike KPL's Summer Reading Challenge. He explained since school has been in session, he has been active in attending workshops where he can assist kids with homework assignments. At one such session, he was able to see their collection of books that kids choose from when they have completed their assignments, and stated he felt his expertise could be leveraged to improve the quality of the collection.

Discussion: K. Randolph asked whether S. Siebers has offered Spanish language story times. S. Siebers stated efforts to create & engage a regular patron base who would be interested in such story times have not had much traction. Instead, he has been looking for Spanish language preschools with whom the library can partner for outreach purposes to that end, but it does not appear there are any such schools. He reported that a bilingual story time will be held Saturday, October 1st, and plans are in the works for a Day of the Dead celebration on October 5th.

In closing, S. Siebers showed trustees the removable magnetic decals he places on his car when he is out performing outreach services. They were created through a Friends of KPL mini-grant, and one is written in English, the other in Spanish.

Disposition: Trustees thanked S. Siebers for his report.

D. Legislative Update – Diane Schiller

Report: D. Schiller reported over the past several months, there have been a handful of legislative items passed, but none apply directly to the library. These include an adjustment of the ‘Good Samaritan’ law which provides protection for individuals reporting drug overdoses. Additionally, a bill has gone to Gov. Snyder allowing for regulated marijuana dispensaries to supply edibles for medical purposes.

Other legislation seems to be languishing in committees. The fall legislative schedule will be sparse until after the election. They are off with the exception of one day in October and five days in November.

The Michigan Library Association recently published a release that explained they had spoken to the Chair of the Tax Policy Committee, where the legislation regarding the TIF capture of public library revenue is currently sitting. The Chair of the Committee indicated to the MLA that the bill was being considered for a public meeting taking place yet this fall.

The previously-reported upon series of FOIA-related bills have passed the House as of last Thursday, and have gone on to the Senate. These bills would subject the State Legislature, Governor’s office, etc. to the same treatment & conditions under FOIA as KPL, for example.

She also stated there were a couple lawsuits which may or may not affect certain portions of state funding, which could ultimately affect library revenue. One was filed with the Michigan Court of Appeals by local government officials claiming the state has routinely shorted Michigan cities money. The other concerns the 3% MPSERS health subsidy. The Michigan Attorney General decided he was not going to participate, but Governor Snyder’s office has appealed for, theoretically, the last time.

Discussion: J. VanderRoest asked whether the library receives many requests for information under FOIA. D. Schiller stated it is sporadic. One regularly-occurring request comes from a group interested in tracking how KPL conducts purchasing activities. On occasion, we receive other requests for different types of information.

L. Godfrey asked whether D. Schiller had any information regarding Gilbert’s pushing for property and sales tax capture for development in Detroit. D. Schiller stated she hadn’t heard about it, but she would look.

As a last thought, D. Schiller stated at a recent MERS work session, she heard there may be potential reforms to the retirement process for government employees. The Governor’s office has formed three separate taskforces to examine a variety of issues that concern the unfunded liability within MERS. L. Godfrey asked whether the goal was to fix the liability or exacerbate it. D. Schiller stated the goal was to fix it, but such efforts necessitated a balancing act of sorts.

Disposition: Trustees thanked D. Schiller for her report.

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. *Finance and Budget Committee* – No meeting.
- B. *Personnel Committee* – No meeting.
- C. *Fund Development and Allocations Committee* – No meeting.
- D. *Director's Building Advisory Committee* – No meeting.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

A. *Director's Report*

Report: Director Rohrbaugh began by sharing exciting news regarding a very generous bequest from the estate of Irving Schensul, whose family owned a number of restaurants, including a popular cafeteria in downtown Kalamazoo for many years. The funds will come through an endowment at the Kalamazoo Community Foundation. Mr. Schensul passed away in 2001, and many long-time KPL employees would remember him well. Director Rohrbaugh stated she recalled her time as a reference librarian, welcoming Mr. Schensul to the library each and every morning when the doors opened. He was a very frequent user of various business publications including *Value Line* and *The Wall Street Journal*.

She then passed around materials related to Irving Schensul, his family, his businesses, etc. that Patrick Jouppi and Alex Merrill located in the Local History Room at Central Library. She explained that upon his passing in 2001, the bulk of his estate was inherited by his nephew, who has now passed away. Upon transfer of his estate to the Kalamazoo Community Foundation, two endowments were created in Irving's name; one to benefit the Kalamazoo Public Library, and one to benefit the Congregation of Moses.

Director Rohrbaugh stated she was excited to announce that the library's portion will be \$2.5 million. Communication from the Kalamazoo Community foundation indicates the funds should come to them by the end of the calendar year, and that the library will be able to draw interest as early as January of 2018. The estimated interest generated annually is approximately \$125,000. Director Rohrbaugh explained over the next year, there will be a discussion regarding how the funds should be spent, and she suggested the funds benefit services that interested Mr. Schensul. She stated this should be viewed as a testament to KPL's strong customer service skills; staff clearly made an impression on Mr. Schensul, and that is something the library can be proud of.

She then reported during conversations with the Kalamazoo Community Foundation, the topic of Reading Together came up, at which point she was able to share plans for bringing a pair of high-profile authors to Kalamazoo in honor of the program's 15th anniversary. The foundation, after news of the bequest came out, contacted Director Rohrbaugh and told her they would like to provide \$50,000 from the endowment in order to fund these author visits. More details will be provided before long.

She then drew Trustees' attention to a number of items on the Director's Report, beginning with communication between herself at Loaves and Fishes, who are opening a location at the Douglass Community Center. They plan to open in December with open hours taking place on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

Director Rohrbaugh then stated Youth Services staff had created a very well-received display of books in the Children's Room at Central Library entitled 'Resist Bias'. Images of the display have been shared by a number of local organizations on Facebook and it has generated positive attention.

She then reported the Oshtemo branch had recently hosted the Commission on Middle East Affairs for the purposes of conducting a town hall meeting on the topic of refugees from the Middle East arriving in Kalamazoo. Twelve families have relocated to the area, and more are on the way. KPL staff are currently engaged in collecting items for welcome bags for these families.

Lastly, Director Rohrbaugh stated the Local History Room had recently received a large collection of scrapbooks, correspondence, ledgers, and photos from the Milham family. She drew a parallel between this donation and the bequest from Irving Schensul and reminded those in attendance of what an honor it is for the library to be held in such high esteem by local families.

Discussion: President Caple asked when the Reading Together Committee will be ready to announce the title of the next Reading Together selection. Director Rohrbaugh stated it should be any day now. M. Cockrell agreed.

L. Godfrey asked what a 'life safety monitoring panel' is. S. Lindemann explained that is the panel that controls fire safety and smoke detection within a facility.

L. Godfrey then asked how local organizations became aware of the 'Resist Bias' display in the Children's Room. A. Vernola explained someone from the Kalamazoo Community Foundation took a photo of it, shared it on social media, and then it was re-shared by other parties.

K. Randolph asked whether the 1, 2, 3, Play With Me series would be expanded to other locations besides Central Library and the Oshtemo branch. Sue Warner, Head of Youth Services explained 1, 2, 3, Play With Me is a proprietary model requiring attendance by librarians at specific training sessions. Upon completion of training, specific locations are certified as official 1, 2, 3, Play With Me locations. While it would be great to expand to other locations, it would require additional staff training.

President Caple recalled the restrictions on this particular program were quite specific when it was initially adopted, and asked for a review of those restrictions. S. Warner explained that appropriate KPL staff were identified and then sent to a three-day training series so their locations could become designated. Further funding would be required to train additional staff. Currently, Bill Caskey, Lead Children's Librarian and Nancy Davis-Smith, Lead Oshtemo Librarian, are certified.

J. VanderRoest asked if public dumping had been an issue at KPL facilities, and whether that is what has spurred the construction of a new dumpster enclosure at Oshtemo. S. Lindemann explained that historically it had been an issue specifically at the Oshtemo location.

President Caple stated he was pleased to see a Director's Report item calling attention to the professional and calm demeanor of Chris Hawley, Lead Security Guard at KPL. President Caple

explained that he had also witnessed occasions of Chris's professional handling of delicate situations in the past.

VIII. PERSONS REQUESTING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

No one addressed the Board.

IX. COMMENTS BY TRUSTEES

- L. Godfrey explained she had spoken to someone earlier in the day who had previously lived out of the KPL service district, and is now an Eastwood patron. It was described as a wonderful opportunity. She then asked if she was recalling correctly that former Library Director Saul Amdursky had known Irving Schensul. Director Rohrbaugh stated that in addition to knowing him as a patron, S. Amdursky knew Mr. Schensul from the Congregation of Moses. President Caple asked whether a public announcement would be made. Director Rohrbaugh said she would have to check with the Kalamazoo Community Foundation.
- J. VanderRoest expressed his desire that the record show that although he arrived at the meeting after the Resolution Honoring the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and its Contribution to Building the Capacity of Public Libraries was adopted, the resolution has his full support. Secondly, he drew attention to Banned Books Week, currently in progress, and stated that commitment to standing against censorship in all its forms is a commendable undertaking.
- R. Brown stated last Saturday, he witnessed a KPL security guard pursuing a patron into Bronson Park. A brief conversation ensued, and the guard then returned to the library with a stack of DVDs that were presumably stolen. The exchange was pleasant and professionally handled.
- K. Randolph had no comments.
- President Caple had no comments.

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: R. BROWN MOVED AND J. VANDERROEST SUPPORTED THE MOTION TO MOVE TO CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS A PERSONNEL ISSUE.

Roll Call Vote: L. Godfrey – yes; k. Randolph – yes; R. Brown – yes; J. VanderRoest – yes; B. Caple – yes.

MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Trustees moved to an executive session at 5:16 P.M.

MOTION: J. VANDERROEST MOVED AND L. GODFREY SUPPORTED THE MOTION TO RETURN TO OPEN SESSION.

Roll Call Vote: L. Godfrey – yes; V. Wright – yes; C. Tenbrink – yes; K. Randolph – yes; R. Brown – yes; J. VanderRoest – yes; B. Caple - yes

MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Trustees moved to open session at 5:40 P.M.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no objection, President Caple adjourned the meeting at 5:41 P.M.

X _____
Kerria Randolph
Secretary

[Return to Agenda](#)